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Kerala rolls out three-pronged plan to tackle human-wildlife conflict

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Kochi: The Kerala government has outlined a detailed strategy to address human-wildlife conflict in Aralam and Wayanad, informing the High Court of

a multi-pronged action plan focusing on prevention, response and long-term mitigation.

The roadmap was submitted by the Chief Secretary before a Division Bench of the High Court comprising A K Jayasankaran Nambiar and Jobin Sebastian, which is hearing a batch of petitions on the issue. The court had earlier sought a detailed report.

According to the submission, the state has adopted a three-pillar approach- strengthening physical barriers, promoting behavioural changes, and improving forest habitats- while also addressing tribal welfare and livelihood concerns. The plan classifies various mitigation measures based on urgency, categorising them as critical, high and medium priority.

Kerala has already declared human-wildlife conflict a "state specific disaster" in March 2024, enabling a structured disaster management response. Since then, the government has set up three-tier coordination committees at the state, district and local levels, revised compensation norms under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF), and established emergency operations centres to support rapid response.

Specialised teams, including Rapid Response Teams (RRTs), Primary Response Teams (PRTs) and community vigilance groups, have also been deployed in vulnerable areas. The government informed the court that it plans to deploy advanced technology and remote monitoring systems, particularly for maintaining barriers such as solar fencing along forest fringes.

Addressing concerns over basic amenities in tribal resettlement areas, the government said steps have been taken to improve drinking water supply in Aralam. An amount of ₹45 lakh has been sanctioned for the purpose, and around 30,000 litres of water are being supplied daily through GPS-enabled tanker lorries with local monitoring in place.

Local self-government bodies have also been authorised to allocate funds for water supply in affected areas until May 2026.

(With LiveLaw inputs)